GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:903
ANSWERED ON:07.02.2017
Suicide by Farmers
Datta Shri Sankar Prasad;Gavit Dr. Heena Vijaykumar;Hegde Shri Anant Kumar Dattatreya;Jayavardhan Dr. Jayakumar;Kushwaha Shri Ram Kumar Sharma;Mahadik Shri Dhananjay Bhimrao;Owaisi Shri Asaduddin;Patil Shri Vijaysinh Mohite;Satav Shri Rajeev Shankarrao;Singh Shri Bharatendra;Sule Smt. Supriya Sadanand;Venkatesh Babu Shri T.G.

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether according to the National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), farmer suicides rose by 42 per cent between 2014 and 2015 and if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(b) the States that recorded the highest number of farmer suicides in the country during the last three years;

(c) whether NCRB records also show that there has been a steep decline in suicide by agricultural labourers and if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the Government has conducted any study to ascertain the reasons for growing number of farmer suicides in the country and if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government to prevent suicides by farmers by creating conditions favourable for farmers?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE

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(a): National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) published data on suicides committed by self employed persons in Farming/Agriculture since 1995. From 2014, the data on suicides in Farming/Agriculture has been delineated as Farmers/Cultivators and Agricultural Labourers.
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As per NCRB Report, suicides by Farmers/Cultivators have gone up from 5,650 in 2014 to 8,007 in 2015 recording an increase of 41.7%. 'Bankruptcy or indebtedness' and 'Farming relating issues' are reported as major causes of suicides among Farmers/Cultivators in 2015.

(b): As per NCRB Report, in 2013, five States recorded higher number of suicides in Farming/Agriculture which were Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh.

As per NCRB, in 2014 five States recorded higher number of suicides by Farmers/cultivators were Maharashtra, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh and Karnataka. In 2015, six States recorded highest number of such suicides which were Maharashtra, Telangana, Karnataka, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh.

(c): Yes, Madam. Suicides by Agricultural Labourers have come down from 6,710 in 2014 to 4,595 in 2015 recording a decrease of 31.5%.

(d): Taking cognizance of the problem of Agrarian distress and consequent farmers suicide in country, Government has undertaken a study "Farmers Suicide in India: Causes and Policy Prescription" as an All India coordinated study in the work plan 2016-17. The study was allotted to Institute of Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bengaluru as a coordinator of the study. The study is being conducted in major suicide hit States of the country.

(e): Agriculture, including agricultural indebtedness, being a State subject, the State Governments take appropriate measures for development of agriculture in the State. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and budgetary support.

The strategy of the Government is to focus on farmers' welfare by making farming viable. Farm viability is possible, when cost of cultivation is reduced, yields per unit of farm are increased and farmers get remunerative prices on their produce. The Department has been implementing various schemes to meet this objective, viz.

(i) Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme by which the farmers can know the major and minor nutrients available in their soils which will ensure judicious use of fertiliser application and thus save money of farmers. The balanced use of fertiliser will also enhance productivity and ensure higher returns to the farmers.

(ii) Neem Coated Urea is being promoted to regulate urea use, enhance its availability to the crop and reduce cost of fertilizer application. The entire quantity of domestically manufactured and imported urea is now neem coated.

(iii) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) is being implemented with a view to promote organic farming in the country. This will improve soil health and organic matter content and increase net income of the farmer so as to realise premium prices.

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(iv) The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) is being implemented to expand cultivated area with assured irrigation, reduce wastage of water and improve water use efficiency.

(v) National Agriculture Market scheme (e-NAM) was approved on 1.7.2015 with a budget allocation of Rs. 200 crore to be implemented during 2015-16 to 2017-18. The releases of grants under the scheme are made on the basis of completion of 3 reform pre-requisites i.e. Single Trading License, Single License Fee and Creation of e-Platform for Trading. The scheme was launched on 14.04.2016 in 8 States viz. Gujarat, Telangana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Jharkhand covering 21 markets. The Scheme envisages initiation of e-marketing platform at national level and will support creation of infrastructure to enable e-marketing in 585 regulated markets across the country.

(vi) Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) is being implemented from Kharif 2016 season. PMFBY has addressed all the shortcomings in the earlier schemes and is available to the farmers at very low rates of premium. This scheme would provide insurance cover for all stages of the crop cycle including post-harvest risks, in specified instances.

(vii) The Government provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans up to Rs.3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment. Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2015-16, in order to provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. The benchmark for initiating relief measures by banks has also been reduced to 33% crop loss, in line with the National Disaster Management Framework.

(viii) In addition, the Government is implementing several Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. National Food Security Mission (NFSM); Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH); National Mission on Oilseeds & Oil Palm (NMOOP); National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA); National Mission on Agricultural Extension & Technology (NMAET) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).

Minimum Support Price (MSP) is notified for both Kharif and Rabi crops based on the recommendations of the Commission on Agriculture Costs & Prices (CACP). The Commission collects & analyses data on cost of activation and recommends MSP. The Government has also declared bonus on pulses for Kharif 2016 over and above the approved MSP. Even during last year, Government offered bonus over and above the MSP in case of pulses.

Further, the Government undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy under its 'MSP operations'. In addition, Government implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities not covered under the MSP Scheme, on the request of State/UT Government. The MIS is implemented in order to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop when the prices tend to fall below the economic level/cost of production.

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